



MONTANA WETLAND NEWS

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News Bits about Montana's Wetlands – To submit your news item, please e-mail lsaul@mt.gov

Wetland jobs

[Wetlands Environmental Science Specialist](#) closing date 4/22/08. The purpose of this position is to support the state Wetland Program by implementing three of the strategic directions from [Montana's Strategic Framework](#).

[MT NHP Ecologist/Project Manager](#). Review of candidates will begin on April 16 and continue until the position is filled.

Regulation

EPA and Corps released new rules for wetland and stream mitigation under the Clean Water Act <http://www.epa.gov/wetlandsmitigation/>. An EPA and Corps press conference, the EPA announced that the new rule is the most significant advancement in the wetland regulatory program since no net loss in 1989. Significant changes from status quo:

- Clarifies stream mitigation standard
- Retains in-lieu fee (ILF) option for mitigation
- Provides for an equivalent effective standard for the 3 types of mitigation
- Sets a hierarchy for preferred compensatory mitigation 1) mitigation banking where available, 2) ILF, 3) permittee responsibility
- Provides a greater role for public participation
- Requires monitoring for enforceability of all sites and information will be made available to public agencies and citizens

Interagency Teams have been developing regional supplement wetland delineation manuals. http://www.usace.army.mil/cw/cecwo/reg/reg_supp.htm The Arid West supplement is approved for use, but only applies to a piece of Carbon Co. The Western Mountain and Great Plains supplements cover the rest of Montana and will likely be published as interim proposals in the next few weeks. The plan is to include a year long comment period prior to finalizing. Watch for a Corps Public Notice.

Science and Planning Tools

The Environmental Law Institute's ["Planner's Guide to Wetland Buffers for Local Government"](#) is based on detailed examination of 50 enacted wetland buffer ordinance, nine model ordinances, and several hundred scientific studies and analyses of buffer performance.

A six-part Wetlands & Watersheds Article Series from the Center for Watershed Protection is available to integrate wetlands into larger watershed protection.

<http://www.cwp.org/wetlands/articles.htm>

Article 1: Direct and Indirect Impacts of Urbanization on Wetland Quality

Article 2: Using Local Watershed Plans to Protect Wetlands

Article 3: Adapting Watershed Tools to Protect Wetlands

Article 4: A Local Ordinance to Protect Wetland Functions

Article 5: The Next Generation of Stormwater Wetlands

Article 6: The Importance of Protecting Vulnerable Streams & Wetlands at the Local Level



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Watch for 3 articles funded by EPA Region 8 on a summary of scientific literature on stream vegetative buffer size needed to protect water quality, fish and aquatic habitat, and wildlife and wildlife habitat. Other resources such [“Stream Setbacks, Public Health and Safety”](#) for Ravalli Co, and a photo gallery of stream setback issues are available here

http://www.mtaudubon.org/html/take_action_streams_and_marshes_planning.htm

Restoration

Preliminary work by the USGS and Ducks Unlimited Canada scientists for the Plains CO2 Reduction Partnership suggests that restoration of prairie wetlands has great potential to sequester carbon. <http://www.undeerc.org/PCOR/products/pdf/FactSheet5.pdf>

Grants

EPA Region 8 has issued the Request for Proposals for Wetland Development Grants <http://www.epa.gov/region8/water/wetlands/grants.html#1> A Montana DEQ led Grant Review Team provides pre-proposal peer review. [Pre-proposals](#) are due April 18.

A draft [EPA Region 8 Grants](#) document summarizes 2000-2007 wetland grants issued for the 6 state and 27 tribe region. Opportunity for technology transfer from past projects.

[NAWCA Summary Sheet for Montana](#) identifies North American Wetland Conservation Act grants issued in Montana. <http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/grants/nawca/index.shtm>

Farm Bill

[Ducks Unlimited reports](#) that Montana stands to loose nearly half of its CRP in the Prairie Pothole Region (PPR) of the state (1.15 million acres) in 5 years. Wetland managers are concerned about effects on wildlife, soil erosion and water quality.

The 2007 Farm Bill should be decided by April 18, 2008, or will continue existing Farm Bill another year and begin negotiations anew next year.

Meetings/Workshops

EPA Region 8 Western Wetlands Monitoring and Assessment Workgroup meeting in Rapid City April 29- May 1. <http://www.internationalwaterinstitute.org/>

Montana Wetland Field Tours and Technical Session. June 10-12, Dillon Montana
June 10 - noon meet for 1 of 2 field tours: Madison Valley or Ruby & Beaverhead Valley
June 11 - all day meeting/technical session in Dillon followed by an evening social.
June 12 – all day field tour to the Centennial Valley. Back to Dillon by 4:15 pm
Registration, agenda, and lodging information will be out soon. Register by May 20.

Wetlands 2008 will be held in Portland OR Sept 16-19. The Association of State Wetland Managers, Pacific Northwest Chapter of the Society of Wetland Scientists, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Oregon Dept of State Lands. Submit abstracts by April 11, 2008. <http://www.aswm.org/calendar/wetlands2008/index.htm>